

# E-News

## February 2013

### **BLM Colorado Ranger and State Park Rangers rescue two fawns stuck on an icy reservoir.**

Two deer fawns were trapped on some thin ice until Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Colorado's Little Snake Field Office Ranger Ed Hendricks called for a chilly rescue.

While patrolling east of Craig, Colo. Dec. 21, a citizen flagged down Ranger Hendricks and notified him that two deer fawns were stranded on the ice at the nearby Elkhead Reservoir. When he arrived, he found the two fawns were about 200 feet from the shore. He spotted their exhausted and distraught mother waiting for them on the bank.

The lake had frozen overnight and was no more than ½-inch thick, the temperature was dropping below zero, and the sun was beginning to set. Ranger Hendricks called his counterparts at the Yampa State Parks office for assistance.

State Park Rangers Ron DeLacroe, Jacob Dewhirst and Matt Schuler quickly arrived with a boat and ice suits, and rescue operations began.

"The rangers crawled out onto the ice, and it began to swell and crack," Hendricks said. "The sound of the ice coming to life could be heard through the entire valley. It sounded as if the ice was talking to us – and telling us to stay away."

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**Meet Stuart W. Schneider, Gunnison Associate Field Office Manager**

Stuart W. Schneider started as the Associate Field Manager in the Gunnison Field Office in January 2013. He comes to the BLM from the National Park Service, where he most recently served as the Chief Ranger at the Niobrara National Scenic River.

Schneider started his federal career after finishing his B.S. in Fish and Wildlife Management from the University of Missouri/Columbia in 1979.

Schneider has been married for 26 years and has three grown children. His hobbies and interests include hiking, backpacking, canoeing, mountain biking, hunting, fishing, rock and ice climbing, mountaineering, reading, observing nature, photography, creative writing and music.



Dewhirst and Schuler reached the first fawn, whose body was actually frozen to the ice. They freed the fawn, loaded it into the boat and pulled it back to shore.

The second rescue was more difficult. Rangers returned to the ice and got within 20 feet of the second fawn when they reached the end of their safety rope. To give the rangers enough rope to reach the fawn, Hendricks and the other ranger on shore formed a human chain, with one braced on the shore.

"The rangers on the ice got into the prone position and crawled to the deer," Hendricks said. "One was flat on the ice, holding onto the boat with one hand and reaching as far as he could with the other hand, holding onto the foot of the second ranger, who was reaching as far as he could for the stranded deer.

"The deer tried to get away, but kept falling down with legs spread out sideways. She began calling to her mother."



Two fawns trapped on the icy reservoir



BLM Ranger and State Parks Rangers rescue one of the fawns.

The ranger was finally able to grab the fawn's leg. After a brief struggle, the deer was loaded into the boat and all three were pulled to the safety of shore. The three deer were reunited and left to recover.

"I really appreciate the state rangers responding without hesitation to my call for assistance, especially since it was a Friday evening just before a holiday," Hendricks said. "This was a great example of our two agencies coming together with no advanced planning to handle a time-critical situation."

## Operation Warfighter: Success in the Making

*by Kalem Lenard, BLM Royal Gorge Field Office*

When Sgt. Nathan Edgerton enlisted with the Army as a cavalry scout in November 2004, he never imagined that a 26-month deployment to Iraq would eventually lead him to a career in land management, but that's just what happened. After being injured during combat, Edgerton was relegated to office duties while his battalion continued training without him. While pondering the timeless question of "what next," Edgerton reflected on his youth and exploring the public lands of Idaho. He let that reflection direct his career search.

After researching various positions within the federal government, Edgerton discovered the Bureau of Land Management.

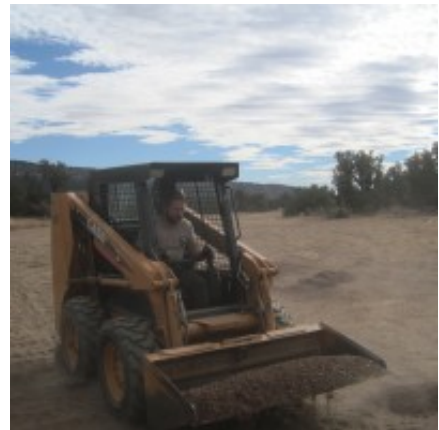
The agency seemed to fit his goal of working outside in a meaningful career, as well as his desire to live in areas surrounded by public lands to explore.

"I had heard rumors of a program called 'Operation Warfighter' that assisted wounded soldiers in getting civilian experience while they were waiting to get discharged," said Edgerton. "I was determined to use the program as the beginning of a career with BLM."

Meanwhile at the BLM's Royal Gorge Field Office, an email came across Kalem Lenard's desk in Canon City, Colo., The e-mail informed Lenard, an outdoor recreation planner, that Edgerton was interested in an internship with the BLM through the Operation Warfighter program.



Nathan Edgerton working on the land



Nathan Edgerton, Dino Flats

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*Operation Warfighter: Success in the Making cont...*

“I had never heard of the program before receiving that email, but it sounded like a great opportunity for our office and for this soldier,” said Lenard.

After a few phone calls to get details on the program, Lenard and Edgerton were conducting an interview at the BLM office.

“What struck me most was Nathan’s determination and focus on starting a career with the BLM, as well as his giddiness about the internship and the possibilities that it held for him,” said Lenard. “You could tell he was really excited about the prospect of launching a career with the BLM.”

Both parties determined that the internship would be a good fit, so the next week Edgerton reported to the Royal Gorge Field Office, ready to work.

Over the course of the next three months, Edgerton worked side by side the BLM’s recreation staff to replace tent pads at a campground, make public contacts, and maintain trails. Edgerton also wanted to see what else the BLM had to offer, so he worked with the Forestry, Range, and Law Enforcement programs.

Too soon, the time came when Edgerton was released from the Army, but the BLM staff promised to let him know if any opportunities came open.

As luck would have it, the next spring the Royal Gorge Field Office had positions open for its off-highway vehicle crew, and Edgerton was encouraged to apply. With his time served in the military, plus his experience with the BLM through Operation Warfighter, Edgerton easily made the final list of applicants, and then was quickly hired. Edgerton worked for the BLM through the summer, maintaining off-highway vehicle trails, making public contacts, and working on off-highway vehicle related projects.

“Hiring Nathan was a win-win situation for the BLM,” said Lenard. “Not only did we get some much needed help over the winter, but we also provided Nathan training so that when he started working for us in the spring, he was ready to hit the ground running. Operation Warfighter has really been a great program for our office.”

Edgerton agrees.

“My time with the BLM has really opened my eyes to some great career options,” said Edgerton. “I’m really looking forward to a long career in land management.”





*Photo by Bob Wick, BLM-California*

## **Area of Interest**

### **Cataract Gulch, Colorado**

It's never too early to start looking forward to summer. In western Colorado, near Lake City, the Cataract Gulch Trail offers great hiking July through October. The trail climbs at a moderate rate through dense stands of spruce and fir forests. Waterfalls and an old miners cabin add variety to the trip. Near timberline, the trail becomes easier but less defined. Look for the trail by continuing up the drainage and across alpine meadows scattered with beaver ponds. At the head of the drainage are several tundra lakes acting as sources for Cataract Creek. Although fish cannot usually be found in these lakes, the ever present marmot can be spotted from the trail along with ptarmigan and picas.

The Continental Divide is just south of the largest lake at an elevation of 12,200 feet.

